STARK, WAYS AND MEANS DISCUSS HEALTH DELIVERY REFORM

Wednesday, 01 April 2009

"Reforming the way we deliver health care is the key to reducing costs and improving quality. A public health insurance plan is critical because it can speed the adoption of delivery system changes and simultaneously encourage private plans to emulate and innovate."

NEWS – CONGRESSMAN PETE STARK

239 Cannon House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

(202) 225-5065

www.house.gov/stark

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CONTACT: Brian Cook

(202) 225-3202

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Public health insurance plan is essential to ensuring the adoption of critical delivery reforms

WASHINGTON – House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee Chair Pete Stark (D-CA) today helped lead a hearing on reforming the health care delivery system. Members of the committee discussed how to change the delivery of health care to get more value and curb growing health care costs, while encouraging better coordination of care and higher quality.

Rep. Stark: "Reforming the way we deliver health care is the key to reducing costs and improving quality. A public health insurance plan is critical because it can speed the adoption of delivery system changes and simultaneously encourage private plans to emulate and innovate."

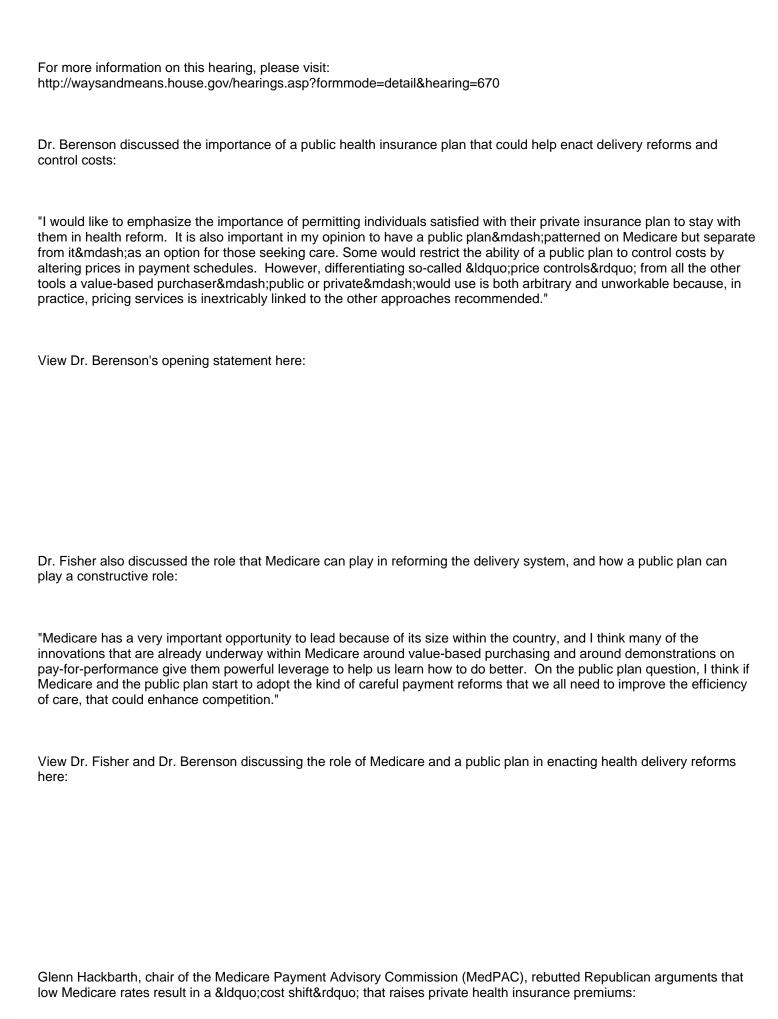
Witnesses before the Committee included:

• Glenn M. Hackbarth, Chairman, Medicare Payment Advisory Commission;

• Elliott S. Fisher, M.D., MPH, Director, Population Health and Policy, The Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice:

• Robert A. Berenson, M.D., Senior Fellow, The Urban Institute.

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&Idquo;If [hospitals] have the ability to compel private payers to pay more, there is no reason to believe that if Medicare were to increase its rates that they would reduce the amount they charge to private payers. They have market power. They have leverage in the negotiation. For-profit hospitals exist to maximize profits, not-for-profit hospitals exist to maximize revenues so that they can provide more services."

View Glenn Hackbarth discussing the cost-shift argument here:

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